

# The Examiner.

AND SEMI-WEEKLY INTELLIGENCER.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY WHEN FREE-BORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC—MAY SPEAK FREE."—MILTON'S EURIPIDES.

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## The Examiner.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 7.

### Concession of Responsible Government.

BEFORE the public mind is imposed upon by the lying organs of the defeated enemies of public liberty in this Island, we publish the following report of a debate in the British House of Commons, which occurred on the motion being made for the usual grant to Prince Edward Island. We take it from the *London Evening Mail* of the 15th ult. What Fitzroy or Duncan will have to say to the determination of Her Majesty's Ministers in reference to the introduction of Responsible Government into this Island, we cannot premise. Really, the pang of disappointment must be great in their breasts, when they remember how much time and paper they have spent to frustrate the intentions of Her Majesty's Ministers, but all to no purpose!

There can be no mistaking the language of the Under Secretary in the report of his speech which follows. He says there is "not the slightest intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to withhold the responsible government promised to the people of Prince Edward Island." The only "promise" made was that which was conveyed in the public Despatch of the 27th December last, and repeated in a private Despatch of a later date,—the former one Mr. Adderley has forcibly brought to the recollection of the Government.

We give the debate without further note or comment, trusting the public will no longer listen to the vain delusions sought to be imposed upon them.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

JULY 12.

It was then moved that the sum of £2,000 should be granted in aid of the charges of Prince Edward's Island.

Mr. ADDERLEY said he had presented a petition of grievances signed by the Speaker and the whole House of Assembly of Prince Edward's Island. They alleged that the supplies in that colony were stopped, and the Legislature was abruptly prorogued with a reprimand by the Governor. Unless some measures were taken by the Government, this colony would be thrown into a similar position to that in which the Cape of Good Hope had found itself placed, and would be compelled to rely upon its own resources. The petitioners of the island were perfectly ready to take upon themselves the expenses of their own civil government; it was, therefore, a matter of interest to the people of this country that the grievances alleged in the petition should be inquired into, and, if they were found to be well grounded, that they should be redressed. In one word, the colonists called for a responsible Government.—They asked to be placed upon the same footing as the colonies in North America. Estates were originally granted by the Crown to parties who were not resident proprietors. The Legislature of the colony voted that all estates held by absentee

proprietors under grants from the Crown should be forfeited where the conditions attached to such grants had not been fulfilled; but the noble lord at the head of the Government, when Secretary of the Colonies in 1841, said that such a proceeding would be unjust. He (Mr. Adderley) was of opinion that the mode in which those grants were originally made was extremely injudicious, and had been most unfavourably to the prosperity of the colony. But the Legislature of the colony had gone beyond that. A vote of want of confidence had been passed; and, no notice having been taken of it, the supplies had been stopped, and everything brought to a dead lock. On the 27th of December, 1849, Earl Grey sent a despatch to the Governor of the colony saying that he could no longer advise the Government to resist the appeal made by the inhabitants of the island, as it was their wish to have a responsible Government. The Legislature declared that it was the wish of the inhabitants to have a responsible Government. That put the Governor in a fix, and he resorted to a general election. The sole question agitated at that election was "a responsible Government or not?" On that appeal to the colony a House of Assembly was returned which passed a resolution in favor of responsible Government almost unanimously, there being three votes against it. The House of Assembly had actually introduced a bill to defray the civil expenses of the colony, on the condition that Lord Grey would fulfil his pledge to give them the responsible government they sought. As he found he could not formally move the postponement of the vote, he should move its rejection.

Mr. M'GREGOR was satisfied that no colony could be well administered where the Governor and Chief Justice were not paid directly by the home Government independently of local votes of supply. It was his opinion that the House of Assembly of Prince Edward's Island had acted unjustly in withholding the supplies, and that the House of Commons would imitate the injustice if they acceded to the amendment of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. HAWES assured the committee that there was not the slightest intention on the part of Her Majesty's Ministers to withhold the responsible Government which had been promised to the people of Prince Edward's Island. There had been a delay in fulfilling the promise, owing to the lengthened correspondence respecting the placing the local government upon a firm and proper footing, and the settlement of certain individual claims; but he had reason to hope, from the last despatch of the Governor, that these matters would be speedily and satisfactorily arranged.

Mr. AGLIONBY was most happy to hear that responsible government was to be extended to Prince Edward's Island, but he should be better pleased if there was some distinct intimation of the exact period.

Mr. HUME also expressed his satisfaction at the intimation of the Under Secretary, and the more so, that he found, from the correspondence that the only difficulty unsettled between the Governor and the House of Assembly was a question of some £200, for a pension (as we understood) to the Attorney General.

Mr. BAILLIE was afraid the Under Secretary for the Colonies was too sanguine in his expectations that an arrangement would be effected in the colony; for, according to the last accounts he (Mr. Baillie) had seen, the colonists entertained no hope that their grievances would be redressed unless their case was taken up in that House.

Mr. V. SMITH thought the first ques-

tion that should be settled with regard to these colonies was that of escheats, because if they gave responsible government without any condition to a colony in which large tracts of land were possessed by proprietors in England, the earliest act of the colonists would be to deprive those persons of their property. This vote was simply for a pension to the late Governor, and the salary of the present Governor, and the only effect of rejecting the vote would be that the colony must pay the money instead of this country.—Now, he thought if the colonies defrayed the cost of their own local administration, this country should pay the salaries of the governors, and he hoped therefore that the hon. gentleman would not press his motion to a division.

Mr. ADDERLEY said the letters he had received from Prince Edward's Island within the last few days did not hold out any hope of the settlement of the question; but, as it seemed to be the general opinion of the committee that it would not be advisable to negative this vote, he would not press his motion.

The vote was then agreed to.

### CONSTITUTION COBBLERS.

We have been informed, by respectable authority, that some time since the prorogation of the Legislature, the Lieut. Governor and Executive Council of this Island drew up a form of a constitution which, in their wisdom, would be best adapted to the wants and circumstances of the Colony; and having procured to the document the signatures of such persons as are unfavourable to Responsible Government, transmitted it to Downing Street, in the expectation, no doubt, that the Secretary of State would alter the form and address, and return it to the Island as an original Despatch. We have not been made fully acquainted with all the features of this new constitution, but it is thought that it has many points of resemblance to the famous address adopted by the last House of Assembly on the motion of Mr. John Longworth, which propounded what was facetiously styled "a moderate system of Responsible Government," and which the Colonial Minister declared his inability to comprehend. One cannot fail to admire the excessive modesty which characterises such a proceeding as this! We can fancy the surprise with which Lord Grey received the application for such a constitution. "Surely," his Lordship might exclaim, "the people of Prince Edward Island are not a pack of such spiritless fools as to submit to the dictation, in this matter, of an Executive Council, without influence or popularity, politically speaking, and under the ban of the House of Assembly." Not many years ago it was an unpardonable crime to give aid and comfort to an agitation against the Proprietors. Here is an agitation—the more dangerous because it is secret—to dispose of the liberties of a whole people—an agitation which has no other object in view than to keep a few long-favoured families about Charlottetown in the constant enjoyment of power, and in the receipt of the people's money. Well

may it be said that things are done in this Island which would be tolerated no where else.

### THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

IN THE EXAMINER of the 27th ult. we shewed that the editor of the *Islander* had falsely asserted that we had "fiercely opposed his proposition of making the Legislative Council an elective body." Mr. Maclean, aware that he is convicted of the falsehood, attempts to wriggle himself out of it by the most paltry shuffle. In his last issue he observes: "The *Examiner* of the 27th ult. denies ever having defended the constitution of the Legislative Council." (The italics are ours.) Now it is obvious to every one who has read our paper that we made no such denial. We simply denied having expressed an opinion, one way or the other, on the elective principle, in reference to the Council. Though satisfied with the existing constitution of the Legislative Council, which more closely approximates to British forms than any other which could be devised; and believing that, under an efficient system of administration, it might be found conducive to all the just and reasonable ends of legislation,—yet we are not prepared to say that the adoption of the elective principle would prove injurious to the public interests. Indeed, many well informed liberals in this and the other colonies are, and have long been favourable to this principle. Certainly, the party in this Island whose views we advocate, have nothing to fear from its adoption; for it would be in conformity with their general principle of recognizing the people as the source of all power; and it would be difficult to adopt a more effectual method for swamping the influence of a would-be aristocracy, and utterly frustrating the designs and intrigues of Family compacts, than by giving the people the election of the upper house of legislature, as such election would be regulated by the lower Branch; and thus to secure a good working Council it would only be necessary for the people, in the first instance, to return a good House of Assembly. If we at all dislike the present movement for elective Councils, it is only because the adoption of such a principle would be a departure from British forms—because we hate tinkering with a constitution which is our birthright, and which works well elsewhere—and because (a reason, perhaps, more cogent than any other) we find the greatest clamourers for the elective principle are those who all along resisted reform in the Government—who struggled for years to subdue the democratic spirit, and, now when they are about to be stripped of place and power, as their confederates have been in the other Provinces only make use of this measure as a dodge to gain a little temporary popularity. It is a fixed principle of our political creed